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## ANGELS JEWISH AND ANGELS BUDDHIST

### *Introduction*

If it is true <sup>1</sup> that Jewish and Greek stories reached India, by which I mean the Indian cultural area including Arachosia, Aria, Gandhāra, Bactria and even Sogdiana, and so, by the beginning of our era, became incorporated in Buddhist literature which, or the descendants of which, we have; then by the same routes Buddhist themes might be reflected in Gospel stories. There was a time when, for professional and confessional reasons, biblical scholars and others <sup>2</sup> refused to admit the reflection of Buddhist material in biblical texts, still more Buddhist beliefs behind Christian beliefs. Many such “refusers” were prepared to accept that Christian ideas percolated amid and were accepted, subject to adaptation and modification, by Buddhist writers. The inconsistency of such a position did not occur to them and they have not been, until recently, called upon to account for it.

The present article studies two cases. In the first a Jewish theme reappears in Buddhist legend of great age and continuity. In the second an opaque piece of Gospel legend becomes intelligible when Buddhist

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1. J.D.M. DERRETT, *The Bible and the Buddhists*, Bornato in Franciacorta (Sardini), 2000.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 28-29. K. BETH, C. CLEMEN, E. LAMOTTE, L. DE LA VALLÉE POUSSIN, J. ESLIN CARPENTER.

myths are referred to. In order to explain the first we ought to imagine a Jewish missionary <sup>3</sup>, official or voluntary, equipped with a Greek version of our Psalter (perhaps augmented from Qumran, who knows?), also equipped with a basic knowledge of Indian mythology, intending to press the case for Judaism – a task which only a heroic person might attempt. We can imagine him meeting patient Buddhist enquirers, whether or not of Indic extraction, equally patiently enduring a translation of Hebraic idiom into a formula which could find a place in Buddhist «atheistical» minds. As Buddhaghosa put it, «There is no God or Brahmā, Creator of the round of births. Phenomena alone flow on – cause and components their condition» <sup>4</sup>. I am not pretending that no Hindus or Buddhists knew about monotheism: what is clear is that, for Indians the gods Viṣṇu and Śiva were still emerging from a chaos of ideas, while to Buddhists the Vedic deities Brahmā and Sakka (Indra) were no doubt deities of a higher calibre than ordinary *devatās*, but always subordinate to the embodiment of Enlightenment, the Buddha (cf. 1 Cor 6:3). This conception of deities would be a formidable obstacle to any imaginary missionary – unless he were of outstanding mental elasticity, unless, in short, he were all things to all men, which, indeed, Buddhist missionaries themselves aimed to be <sup>5</sup>.

For Buddhist ideas to influence gospel writers the opposite process must be envisaged. In any part of the Seleucid empire early Jewish Christian missionaries can have studied Buddhist missionary techniques, both to learn how that long senior undertaking has succeeded, and also how to present Christian monotheism and Messianism to people who had received a god-free (but not superstition-free) ethical training, soon to become a religion. In the course of this task details of Buddhist fantasies and legends would become pedagogically meaningful. Presentation of the gospel story to the Greek-speaking

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3. JOSEPHUS, *Antiquities* 18. 81-84. L.H. FELDMANN, L.C.L., *Josephus* ix, p. 406. Cf. Mt 23:15. DERRETT, op. cit., p. 89.

4. Visuddhi-magga, pp. 602-603; trans., Bhikkhu Ñānamoli, 1975, pp. 700-701. Gunapāla Dharmasiri, *Buddhist Critique of the Christian Concept of God*, Colombo, 1974, p. 26.

5. 1 Cor 9:22; Dīgha-nikāya XVI 3,22; text ii. 109; trans., T.W. and C.A.F. RHYS DAVIDS, *Dialogues of the Buddha*, London, <sup>3</sup>1951, ii, p. 117; Saddharmapuṇḍarīka VIII. 5-7, trans. Kern, p. 196; XXIII. trans., pp. 401-402.

world might be facilitated. Let us proceed to investigate this hypothetical two-way process, remembering that Jewish material has been found in a Jātaka <sup>6</sup> and Buddhist material in a Jewish *midrash* (scriptural exegesis) <sup>7</sup>.

### Devadatta

Scarcely anything is more firmly embedded in Buddhist legend than the tale of Devadatta <sup>8</sup>, Gotama Buddha's relative by blood and marriage who aimed to head a *saṅgha* (sc. «church») of his own <sup>9</sup>, having been accepted by Gotama himself as a Buddhist *bhikkhu* (sc. «renunciate», «monk»). Devadatta conspired to oust the Buddha, commencing to plot with a prince, Ajātasattu <sup>10</sup>. The latter plotted against his own father, whom he subsequently ousted. That Ajātasattu should conspire with one ascetic notability rather than another is not explained. But the lurid tale of Devadatta's plots, their failures, and the dire fate visualised for their author, is part and parcel of the fictional life of the Buddha. Between the fourth and third centuries BC Buddhists will have become acquainted with the wealth and variety of

6. 1 Kgs 3:16-17 at Jātaka 546. DERRETT, *op. cit.*, p. 90, also M. WINTERNITZ, *History of Indian Literature*, Calcutta, 1972 (repr. 1977), ii, p. 138n. W. KIRFEL at *Saeculum*, 7 (1956), pp. 369-384 at pp. 378-379.

7. J.D.M. DERRETT, *A Moses-Buddha parallel and its meaning*, in *Archiv Orientalní*, 58 (1990), pp. 310-317.

8. Vinaya ii. 182-203. H. OLDENBERG, *Buddha*, London & Edinburgh, 1882, pp. 160-161. E.J. THOMAS, *The Life of Buddha as Legend and History* (1948), London, <sup>3</sup>1975, pp. 133-135; E. FRAUWALLNER, *The Earliest Vinaya and the Beginnings of Buddhist Literature*, Rome, 1956, pp. 116-121. H.W. SCHUMANN, *The Historical Buddha*, London, 1989, pp. 235-236 has a more sceptical tone. B. MUKERJEE, *Die Überlieferung von Devadatta, dem Widersacher des Buddhas in den kanonischen Schriften*, Munich, 1966. E. LAMOTTE, *Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien*, Louvain-la-Neuve, 1976, pp. 728-729. *Saddharmapundarika* XI, trans., Kern, p. 246 tells how Devadatta will become a Buddha (Mahāyāna optimism).

9. He asked the Buddha to resign, but the latter refused (*Culla-vagga* VII. 3,1). The Buddha reported Devadatta's unfitness for the *saṅgha* everywhere (*ibid.*, 2). *Mūlasarvāstivādinaya* at J.L. Panglung, *Die Erzählstoffe des Mūlasarvāstivādinaya analysiert auf Grund der Tibetischen Übersetzung*, Tokyo, 1981, pp. 104-105. The schism: *Cv* VII.3.14-17. Panglung, p. 132. E. LAMOTTE, *op. cit.*, pp. 69-70.

10. *Cv* VII.3.4. The full story (?) is at Panglung, *op. cit.*, pp. 103-104. LAMOTTE, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-20.

Greek biographies then extant <sup>11</sup>; the works of Xenophon (a younger contemporary of the Buddha) and Plato depicting a *philosopher* who was also a would-be *lawgiver* <sup>12</sup> can have stimulated the characteristic alternation of precept and reminiscence or romance which still embodies the *vinayas* of the various Theravāda schools.

It was discovered not long ago that the Devadatta story combines two forms. In the older he collapses out of chagrin, while in the later, more lurid version he falls alive into hell. We shall be studying the latter. The still younger, much more compassionate idea, that Devadatta becomes eventually a Pratyekabuddha, or even a Bodhisattva, is beyond our horizon. In any considerable collection of ancient sculptures depicting the Buddha's adventures we shall find scenes of Devadatta's plots, some depictions proving that other versions once existed than those testified to in our surviving texts <sup>13</sup>. My present task is to show how unknown Buddhist authors of the front rank, who had already used the Greek myths of Apollo to frame the Buddha's birth-narrative <sup>14</sup>, sketched the Devadatta story upon the template of the combined themes of (1) Korah and (2) the righteous man (e.g. Moses) in converse with Yahweh (the Hebrew Deity) in Psalm 91 (LXX and Vulg. 90).

This incorporation must have taken place before the major schools separated whose *vinayas* are strikingly similar in this and other stories: perhaps in the third century BC. But this depends on assertions in historical texts which are uncorroborated. The schism of Devadatta seems authentic, but the original account, to which I alluded, said he vomited blood, a cliché meaning collapse from chagrin <sup>15</sup>.

11. C.B.R. PELLING, art. *Biography, Greek* in *O.C.D.*, Oxford, <sup>3</sup>1996, pp. 241-242.

12. I have in mind Xenophon's *Memorabilia Socratis* (his *Cyropaedia* will have taught Indo-Greeks and Bactrians Greek as it still teaches Western barbarians), and Plato's *Republic* and *Laws*. Plato's myths were an inspiration to Asia.

13. Pacification of the Mad Elephant, Amarāvati (2nd-3rd cent. AD), no. 90 in Anil de Silva-Vigier, London (Phaidon), 1955; with the image reversed as no. 49 in *The Image of the Buddha*, ed. D.L. Snellgrove, Paris, 1978. The Would-be Assassin (Archer) Converted, Gandhāra (2nd-4th cent. AD), is no. 89 in de Silva-Vigier. This sculpture shows the Buddha receiving powerful aid from the god Sakka.

14. J.D.M. DERRETT, *Homer in India: the Birth of the Buddha*, in *J.R.A.S.* 3rd ser., 2, pt. 1 (1992), pp. 161-176.

15. Vinaya iii. 170-172 (Saṅghāviśeṣa offence X), trans. I.B. HORNER, *The Book of the Discipline* I, London, 1949, pp. 297-300. Cv VII.4,3,5, trans., Rhys Davids, pp. 259,261. All other *vinayas* at Frauwallner, *op. cit.*, pp. 120, 139.

Whoever adopted the Korah story adapted this older narrative. Let the Jewish story's reception be dated before the schools parted company<sup>16</sup>; they retain the inconsistent fates of Devadatta, and the resulting conflict (testimony to the conservatism of the tradition) need not be dated to the remotest period of *vinaya*-making.

We start with the outline story of Devadatta's ambition and treachery. This is recognisable as the story of Moses' relative Korah<sup>17</sup>, who disputed Moses' and Aaron's leadership, asserted an equal right to prophetic powers, defied the couple's rulings in many points of law (a Jewish humorist has detailed all his complaints in a masterpiece of irony)<sup>18</sup>, and founded a substantial «academy» (cf. the *saṅgha*) to propagate his deviant teachings. The earth opened up and swallowed Korah and his company<sup>19</sup>. He had made an alliance with other powerful individuals who simply defied Moses' orders<sup>20</sup>. The end of the conspiracy was that the earth, commanded by the Deity, swallowed Korah and his confederates, while a miraculous fire devoured the rest (Num 16:35). So the spiritual and legal leadership of the Israelites was established without further interference. A justification for Moses' own silent intransigence was provided by the leprosy of his sister Miriam, who had dared to suggest that a woman could have equal prophetic powers with her brother. The host waited until her abject surrender purchased the divine lifting of her leprosy (Num 12:2,10-15).

So the plots, the ambition, the prophecy of doom by Moses (Num 16:28-30), and the earth's «opening her mouth» are all reproduced in the later of the two Devadatta sagas<sup>21</sup>. So much for the framework,

16. FRAUWALLNER, *op. cit.*, p. 117 n. 2, guesses it may have been before Aśoka (mid-3rd cent., BC).

17. J.D.M. DERRETT, *Diffusion: Korah and Devadatta*, in *Archiv Orientalní* 63 (1995), pp. 330-333.

18. J.D.M. DERRETT, *The Case of Korah against Moses Reconsidered*, in *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 24, pt. 1, 1993, pp. 59-78. E. Lamotte's estimate of the intervention of Western materials into the Buddha's biography (*Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien*, Louvain-la-Neuve, 1976, p. 741) may require to be revised.

19. Num 16:31-34. One recollects Ex 15:12. It is a Jewish cliché. Derrett at *Ar.Or.* 63, p. 333 and n. 32. Add Mk 9:42 and parallels.

20. Num 16:1-2, 12-15. An unedifying dispute.

21. Devadatta was swallowed by the earth. Miln. 101 (trans., Horner, i, p. xxxiii); 205 (trans., i., p. 296); Jātaka 422; Jāt. viii.454, trans., iii, p. 271; cf. Jātaka 358, Jāt. v. 182, trans., iii, p. 120. Fa-hien at S. Beal, *Si-yu-ki. Buddhist Records of the Western*

which testifies to a Buddhist mythologist's adopting a meaningful Jewish precedent. His motive has been perceived by Oldenberg as spite: Devadatta was credited with the foundation of a *saṅgha* which still existed centuries later as testified to by Chinese travellers<sup>22</sup>. The Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya contains many invented anecdotes derogatory to Devadatta, and we can guess why.

For reasons of typographical convenience I shall use the Vulgata version of Psalm 91, which, though unknown to both hypothetical Jewish story-teller and Buddhist listener, sufficiently represents the LXX version, while being accessible to my present reader.

Psalm 91 is famous for its multiplicity of voices, and for the profundity and inspirational quality of its contents. The psalm *Qui habitat in adiutorio altissimi* promises the most comprehensive defence of the righteous on the part of God, against every conceivable malady or injury that fate or enemies may devise against him (cf. Ex 9:3-4). Simon de Muis (*Psalms*, 1650) said, *Nihil solidius neque splendidius scribi potest; nec ullum poema cum hoc est comparandum*. Its relevance is plain if we recall its functions in Judaism. By reason of Ps 91 we know that angels will protect a person, particularly against demons. Angels are available in thousands and tens of thousands, as Jesus confirms (Mt 26:53). A wealth of traditional Jewish learning is collected by Billerbeck<sup>23</sup>. The "plague" mentioned in Ps 91:10 refers to demons, thousands of whom fall when one recites those verses. Furthermore the psalm has been used to heal, encourage, and console the sick (so Krauss).

Ps 91's author is said by Rashi (1040-1105), the famous biblical commentator, to be Moses, and with reason. Abraham Ibn Ezra (1089-1164) hesitates. The author could be David (cf. 2 Sam 22), as the Targum explicitly says, or another pious poet. Any pagan hearer

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*World*, New York, 1968, p. xlvii; HIUAN-TSANG, *ibid.*, 8,9. FRAUWALLNER, *op. cit.*, p. 117 n. 2. H. NAKAMURA, *Indian Buddhism*, Delhi, 1989, pp. 60, 82, 100.

22. So HIUAN-TSANG (at BEAL, *Si-yu-ki*, ii, p. 201) cited by LAMOTTE, *op. cit.*, pp. 374, 572. FA-HIEN at BEAL, *op. cit.*, p. xlviii. H. NAKAMURA, *Aspects of Original Buddhism*, in *L. Sternbach Felicitation Vol.*, Lucknow, 1981, pp. 573-578 at p. 578.

23. H. STRACK and P. BILLERBECK, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament IV*, Munich, 1969, pp. 528-529. Midrash Rabbah Gen. LXXVIII.1, Soncino trans., 694, cf. p. 715. Midrash Rabbah Numbers XI.5, Soncino trans., pp. 433-434.

would ask, who was the author who enters into debate with God in this way? In ancient times, the answer «Moses» would make a useful point: the human founder of Judaism, «Moses our teacher», had everything to fear, and needed divine reassurances more than anyone. He was about to be stoned at one point (Ex 17:4), and supplicated Yahweh for reassurance neither for the first nor the last time. The current opinion, however, inclines to Ibn Ezra's guess: the author, having in mind the jeopardy of every outstanding spiritual person, was, if not a court poet or priest, an individual person of faith <sup>24</sup>.

Now we may place the assurances of Yahweh, his promises to his suppliant, in parallel columns, with the items of the Devadatta story as they appear in the eventual *vinaya* account <sup>25</sup>, corroborated as it is in yet later versions <sup>26</sup>.

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24. M. DAHOOD, *Psalms II*, Garden City, 1981, p. 329; H.-J. KRAUSS, *Psalms 60-150*, Minneapolis, 1989, pp. 219-225; M.E. TATE, *Psalms 51-100*, Dallas, 1990, pp. 446-459 (on the lion see p. 449).

25. Cullavagga at Vinaya ii 193-194. Samyutta-nikāya I 4,8; text i.27ff., trans. C.A.F. RHYS DAVIDS (1917), *The Book of Kindred Sayings I*, London, 1979, pp. 38-40; the acute pain due to the splinter, borne stoically. On the praise of the 700 *devas* see below, n. 47. Milinda-pañha (hereafter Miln.), pp. 134, 136, 137, trans., Horner, i, 187, 189-191 (the splinter); text pp. 179-181, trans., pp. 255-257. The splinter grazed him while he was walking.

26. The bowman-rock-elephant sequence is repeated at Introductions to Jātaka 358, *Jāt.* v. 178, trans., H.T. FRANCIS and R.A. NEIL, Cambridge, 1897, iii, p. 118; and Jātaka 416, vii. 415, trans., *ubi cit.*, iii, p. 249; Jātaka 438; *Jāt.* ix. 536, trans., iii, p. 319. For the Dhammapada Commentary see n. 29 below. The prose Introductions to Jātakas can be of any age after the third century, while the Dhammapada Commentary is dated by Burlingame in the fifth century, conjecturally.

*Ps 90 Vulg. = Ps 91 MT*

*Cullavagga VII.3,4-13*

(1) Promise of protection

v. 1 ... *in protectione Dei coeli commorabitur.*

(2) The Highest is his refuge and hope,

v.2 ... *susceptor meus es tu, et refugium meum: deus meus sperabo in eum.*

see (14) below

v.4 ... *sub pennis eius sperabis.*

v.9 ... *altissimum posuisti refugium tuum.*

vv.14,15 *speravit ... protegam ... exaudiam eum.*

(3) He will protect from the snare of the hunters and from a harsh (Gk. "terrifying") word.

(3) The plot: § 4.

v.3 *liberavit me de laqueo venantium, et a verbo aspero.*

(4) His *truth* is a shield (Gk. *armament*), protecting from terror by night.

(4) The Buddha long anticipated Devadatta's corruption: §§ 2,5<sup>27</sup>.

v.5 *scuto circumdabit te veritas eius: non timebis a timore nocturno.*

(5) to protect from *arrows* by day and from attacks by contrivances in darkness and demons at mid-day.

v.6 *a sagitta volante in die, a negotio perambulante in tenebris; ab incursu, et daemonio meridiano.*

(6) It shall not come near though thousands fall.

(5) In order to kill the Buddha a score of men are posted: § 6. The first soldier's (archer's) sword, shield, bow and quiver: § 7. His fear of the B., submission, confession, and the B.'s condonation: § 7.

v.7 *cadent a latere tuo mille ... ad te autem non appropinquabit.*

(6) The B. saves this convert from Devadatta's plot by omniscience: § 7. All score are converted: § 8.

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27. It is curious that the Heb. of Ps 91:5(4) reads *šinnâ w'soherâ*, "encircling shield", literally "large shield and (?) buckler", reappears (?) in Cv VII.3,7 as the soldier's shield which he soon lays aside to prostrate himself before the Buddha.



(7) Thou wilt see the retribution upon sinners.

v.8 ... *oculis tuis considerabis: et retributionem peccatorum videbis.*

(8) No evil will approach thee or plague approach thy tent.

v.10 *non accedet ad te malum: et flagellum non appropinquabit tabernaculo tuo.*

(9) He will order his angels concerning thee to protect thee in all thy ways.

v.11 ... *angelis suis mandavit de te ut custodiant te in omnibus viis tuis.*

(10) They will carry thee (cf. Is 46:3-4; 63:9c) in their hands lest by chance thou strike thy foot upon a stone <sup>30</sup>.

(7) Devadatta's fate predicted by the B. to him and the *bhikkhus*, for in his exceptional case *immediate karma* will bring retribution: § 9 (trans., SBE, XX, 1885, p. 246) <sup>28</sup>.

(8) The *bhikkhus* march round and round the *vihāra* to protect the B. Their action reproved as unnecessary (see (14)): § 10. NB. Ps 34:8 says «The angel of the Lord encamps round those that fear him and delivers them».

(9) Devadatta finds the B. walking up and down. He hurls down a rock. Two mountain peaks come together <sup>29</sup>, stop the rock, and only a splinter (*papatikā*, *sakalikā*) fell and made the B.'s foot bleed: § 9 (trans., p. 245).

(10) See (9) above. [Satan (= Māra) became very interested in this verse (Mt 4:6 / Lk 4:10-11.)]

28. The Buddha's prediction of Devadatta's doom is at Majjhima-nikāya i. 393; Aṅguttara-nikāya iii. 403; Miln. 518-619, trans., i, p. 153. Devadatta himself suffered anguish due to the splinter (Miln. 181, trans., i, p. 257). Those who foment a schism boil in hell for a year: Cv VII.3,16. The style of Devadatta's boiling (Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya, ed. Bagchi, 1970, p. 192) has its Jewish counterparts: Babylonian Talmud (hereafter "b."), B.B. 74a; Sanh. 110a-b; Miln. 67,357; Majjhima-nikāya iii.167, trans., I.B. HORNER, *Middle Length Sayings*, iii, pp. 212-213; Sutta-nipāta 670.

29. Even at Miln, 136, trans., i, p. 190 ("two other rocks, coming together") the cause of their coming is not stated. *Ibid.*, 179, trans., i, 255 they rose up; 181, trans., i, 257 the movement of the splinter was unpredictable. Dhammapada Commentary, book I, story 12, text i. 140-141, trans., E.W. BURLINGAME, *Buddhist Legends*, London, etc., 1979, i, p. 236; text ii, 164, trans., ii, p. 197 provides no additional information. Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya, at Panglung, *op. cit.*, p. 114: the clashing of the mountains is mentioned. Hiuan-tsang (Beal, 153) mentions the Buddha's walking and the stone, but not the mountains.

30. Perhaps the Hebraic idiom is disclosed at Job 5:23; Prov 3:23: God will protect his believers from stumbling, i.e. sinning. Similarly the Targum on this verse,

v.12 *In manibus portabunt te: ne forte offendas ad lapidem pedem tuum.*

(11) Thou shalt walk upon the asp (Heb. lion) and basilisk and tread upon the lion and dragon.

v.13 *Super aspidem et basiliscum ambulabis: et conculcabis leonem et draconem.*

(12) Because he hoped in me I shall free him and protect him because he knew my name.

v.14 *Quoniam in me speravit, liberabo eum: protegam eum, quoniam cognovit nomen meum.*

(13) I will save him and glorify him.

v.15 ... *eripiam eum, et glorificabo eum.*

(14) I will fill him with length of days and reveal my salvation to him.

v.16 *Longitudine dierum replebo eum: et ostendam illi salutare meum.*

(11) Devadatta induced keepers to incite the manslaying elephant Nālāgiri against the B.<sup>31</sup> The *bhikkhus* are frightened: § 11. By love B. pacifies N., stroking him and reciting verses: § 12. N. takes dust from the B.'s feet and puts it on his head, bowing: § 12 (trans., p. 249).

(12) The Buddha's power is revealed by this: §§ 13,14 (trans., p. 251).

(13) The gain and honour of Devadatta fell off, while those of the Buddha increased: § 13.

(14) *Tathāgatas* cannot be murdered. They are extinguished by natural causes in due time: § 10 (trans., p. 247).

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alluding to Ezk 36:36. This is not reproduced in the legend of Devadatta's rock that becomes a stone splinter. Visualising the scene, Devadatta's hope of success would be greater if he *dropped* the stone (Miln.: *pāsānaṃ Bhagavato upari pātessāmīti muñci*) than if, as Bareau said in 1959, he *rolled* it, when indeed the interference of two greater rocks could well spoil his fun.

31. Miln. 207-209, trans., i, p. 300 calls him Dhanapālaka, and so the Mūlasarvāstivādinaya at Panglung, *op. cit.*, p. 117. The legend had more than one form. Ajātaśatru intoxicated the elephant according to Fa-Hien at Beal, p. lix. Ajātaśatru and Devadatta in concert: Hiuan-tsang at Beal, p. 150. There the elephant was subdued by *five* lions miraculously produced by the Buddha. Much is made of the *bhikkhus*' attempting to persuade the Buddha to flee, and then flying themselves, except Ānanda. One recalls Mk 14:30 / Mt 26:56.

Frauwallner has shown <sup>32</sup> that whereas the Pāli story has the sequence “assassins-rock-elephant” (which coincides with the order in Ps 91), the Sarvāstivādins read “rock-assassins-elephant”, the Mahīśāsaka version has “elephant-assassins-rock”; the Dharmaguptaka has “assassins-rock”, and the Mūlasarvāstivādins have “rock-elephant” <sup>33</sup>. Therefore a disturbance of the Pāli order can be shown in the Sarvāstivādin and the Mahīśāsaka versions. In Bareau’s opinion <sup>34</sup> the oldest version is the Mahīśāsaka, the Pāli and Dharmaguptaka being «sister versions», having a common *vinaya-piṭaka* until (he claims) the third century BC. The order shown above would make “elephant-assassin-rock” the oldest Buddhist sequence. But this cannot be taken as certain, since Ps 91 can have done its work prior to all three stories, and the Mahīśāsaka can have deviated for any reason now beyond recovery. Frauwallner <sup>35</sup> opines that the Pāli is free from corruption detectable in the *vinaya* of the Mahīśāsaka, but he will not give preference to the Pāli in general over, e.g., the Dharmaguptaka. We may leave such conjectures in the obscurity which stimulated them.

A very strange motif is the coming together of two *mountains* or peaks. Is this behaviour of mountains unique? The episode worried King Milinda <sup>36</sup>. He did not know of the famous Symplēgades, whose antics entertained Greeks from Homer to Apollonius Rhodius (Apollodorus I. 9,22). He asked how the rock-splinter grazed (pierced) the Buddha’s foot when tradition tells us, «When the Lord was walking, this incognizant great Earth elevated (*unamati*) the low ground and flattened (*oṇamati*) the high ground». The answer was <sup>37</sup> that Devadatta’s treachery caused a great rock to fall, but other great rocks rose up from the earth (*paṭhavito uṭṭhalitvā*) and crushed that rock, but a splinter got away. The legend about the Earth became current, for it appears in

32. *Op. cit.*, pp. 119-120.

33. PANGLUNG, *ubi cit.*, 114, 117 (references).

34. *Recherches sur la biographie du Buddha dans les Sūtrapiṭaka et les Vinayapiṭaka anciens: de la quête de l’éveil à la conversion de Sāriputra et de Maudgalyāyana*, Paris, 1963, p. 378.

35. *Earliest Vinaya* (1956), p. 163.

36. Miln., 179-181; trans., i, p. 254-256.

37. Miln., 179; trans., i, p. 255.

Buddhaghosa's commentary on the *Dīghanikāya* <sup>38</sup>, and the combined and massive learning of the Rhys Davids' and Miss Horner could find no ancient parallel. But the *Lalitavistara* continues the fantasy <sup>39</sup>. Furthermore Hindu writers who need not be older than the Miln. or the *Lalitavistara* confer the same privilege on their heroes <sup>40</sup>.

If one considers the *vinaya* of the *Mūlasarvāstivādins*, consulting both the Sanskrit published by R. Gnoli (1977-8) (II, 166) and the Tibetan translation (Panglung, 1981, 114), one discovers that third-fourth century Buddhists were not content with the mountains spontaneously fragmenting the rock, but wanted it crushed by (the appropriately-named) *Vajrapāṇi*, a friend of the Buddha and a *Bodhisattva*. Nevertheless *Devadatta* remained liable for the damage done by the splinter.

If we turn to Israel some light dawns. The flattening of the earth (every valley exalted, every mountain or hill made low) to make a path for the Messiah is an established fancy <sup>41</sup>, appearing first in Is 40:4 and 49:11 (cf. 35:7-10; 45:2), cited in Lk 3:5, a partial parallel at Ps. Sol. 11:4 (c. 50 BC). The last appealed to the author of 1 Baruch (c. AD 78-100) who says (5:7), «For God commanded every high mountain and the everlasting hills to be made low, and the valleys to be filled and levelled (ὁμαλισμός τῆς γῆς) so that Israel may walk safely in the glory of God». So well established is the idea in Judaism that it seems hardly necessary to posit its origin in Persia as has been done <sup>42</sup>. So the idea that mountains can clear the road for the Enlightened One can well have a Jewish origin. The *Mūlasarvāstivā-*

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38. I.45 according to Horner, *Miln.*, i, p. 254 n. 3. Taken from the *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*, trans., H.C. WARREN, *Buddhism in Translations*, Cambridge MA, 1896, p. 92.

39. *Lalitavistara*, ed. P.L. Vaidya, Darbhanga, 1958, p. 57, discussed by Kölver (see n. 41 below).

40. *Viṣṇu-purāṇa* I.13,49 and *Bhāgavata-purāṇa* IV.18,22 (*Prṭhu*) and *Mahābhārata* III.73,9 (*Bāhuka*).

41. J.D.M. DERRETT, *Every Valley shall be Exalted: Borrowings from Israel in Ancient India?*, in *Z.R.G.G.* 24 (1972), pp. 153-158; B. KÖLVER, *The World Beyond Time, a Scene from the Lalitavistara*, in S. LIENHARD and I. PIOVANO, edd., *Lex et Litterae ... O. Botto*, Alessandria & Turin, 1997, pp. 301-312 at pp. 303, 306. Originally a threat to human arrogance (F. Delitzsch), or a royal road for returning exiles (K. Elliger)?

42. B. LINCOLN, "The Earth Becomes Flat" - a Study of Apocalyptic Imagery, in *C.S.S.H.* 25 (1983), pp. 136-153.

dins' objection itself can be traced to Israel. Amongst the feats of the giant Samson was, say rabbis of the third century, no doubt retailing an ancient legend <sup>43</sup>, his picking up mountains like cymbals, to clash them together. No doubt Samson is a hero («redeemer») in Jewish tradition, afterwards a «type» of Christ, but his play with the mountains, which some rabbis semi-seriously attributed to a *midrash* on Jdgs 13:25 (*pa'am* means "stroke"), was seemingly unmotivated. The Spirit caused him to play with the skittish (Ps 114:6(4)) and querulous mountains (Targ. Jgs 5:5) who expect to be beaten small (Is 41:15).

Moreover there is the idea of "moving mountains" <sup>44</sup>, which an artful rabbi can do as he ingeniously solves exegetical problems <sup>45</sup>, engineering the seemingly impossible <sup>46</sup>, or a disciple of Christ can do if he has sufficient faith (Mt 11:23; 17:20; 1 Cor 13:2). Job voiced something of the kind long before (Job 9:5; 28:9). I suspect here we have circular motion: Jewish ideas, and a Greek fancy, stimulated a Buddhist maxim, while the application of it in specific situations returns to stimulate the rabbinical imagination.

My interest, however, centres on the behaviour of heavenly singers, *devas* or *devatās*, represented in English not as "godlings" but rather as "fairies" or "angels", in this case called "of the Satullapa group" <sup>47</sup>. They watch the whole episode of the rock and salute the Buddha with elaborate verses praising his stoicism <sup>48</sup>. The Buddha's "angels", therefore, are with him when his foot and a stone came into

43. b. *Soṭ.* 9b, Soncino trans., p. 44; Midrash Rabbah Lev. VIII.2, Sonc. trans., p. 102. L. GINZBERG, *Legends of the Jews* IV, pp. 47-48; VI, p. 207.

44. J.D.M. DERRETT, *Studies in the New Testament* VI, Leiden, 1995, pp. 28-41 (= *Bibbia e Oriente* 30, no. 158 (1988), pp. 231-244). Moving a mountain is impossible: Ps. CALLISTHENES, *Life of Alexander*, A.Text, I, 33 (trans. R. Stoneman, London: Penguin, 1991, p. 66). But cf. *Life* γ text III, 26A (Stoneman, p. 184)!

45. Uprooting mountains and grinding them together (Samson's feat); b. *Sanh.* 24a, Sonc., trans., p. 136. STRACK-BILLERBECK, *op. cit.*, I, p. 759. S.T. LACHS, *A Rabbinic Commentary on the New Testament*, Hoboken NY, 1987, p. 262.

46. Lucian, *Navig.* 45; Dio Crysostom 3.30-31. Mar Samuel (d. 254) at b. *B.B.* 3b, Sonc. trans., p. 10; 'Arak. 6a, Sonc. trans., p. 28.

47. Saṃyutta-nikāya I 4,1-4, text i. 16-27, trans., C.A.F. RHYS DAVIDS, *The Book of Kindred Sayings*, London, 1979, i, pp. 25-33. See also I 4,6 and 8. They are not precisely guardian angels on the Jewish pattern: Midrash Rabbah Exod. XXXII.6, Sonc. trans., p. 410; cf. Ps 68: 18(17).

48. Saṃyutta-nikāya I 27, trans., i, pp. 38-39.

painful contact. They do not prevent this injury, but “mountains” play the part, their alacrity not being matched by total efficacy.

*Treading on the lion* has been replaced by Nālāgiri’s placing the dust of the Buddha’s feet on his head, a gesture which expresses the utmost respect. To be so treated by the Indian equivalent of the psalm’s lion or some dangerous reptile proves that the Buddha has a supernatural charisma corresponding to the righteous of Ps 91. Just as moving mountains is a New-Testament cliché, so the promise that one might tread on serpents, etc., figures at Lk 10:19 (cf. Ps 8:6-7; Rom 16:20; Test. Levi 18:12). The idea that such feats befit amicable monks (!) is at Aṅguttara-nikāya XI 16,2<sup>49</sup>. Amongst the advantages of the practice of amity are «he is dear to human beings and non-human beings alike; the *devas* guard him; fire, poison or sword do not affect him ...». It seems an echo of Ps 91 can be detected here also. The story of the Elder Visāka told by Buddhaghosa in Visuddhimagga IX. 68-69<sup>50</sup> is relevant to us since there “non-human” is interpreted as including “deity” for Visāka was befriended by two such, one living in a rock, one in a tree (cf. Saṃyutta-nikāya XLI 10).

If the latter Devadatta story is paralleled by Jewish material and coincides with Jewish piety, the link from Jewish monotheism to Buddhism in its Theravāda style remains obscure. It is the All-highest that protects the righteous person to whom promises are made in scripture, whether this be Moses (it probably was) or David, or Jesus Christ. This “All-highest” is not Brahmā the Creator nor Indra, but Kamma, which Gotama explored and relied upon, which preexisted all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, and enabled Buddhas to appear in successive ages and worlds to deliver beings from their ignorance and woe. It is not necessary to posit a God as prime mover of these. “God” is a turn of speech, designation in common use in the world (*loka-samaññā*, *loka-niyuttiyo*, *loka-vohārā*, *loka-paññattiyo*). A Tathāgata will not be led astray by such<sup>51</sup>. The Hebrew concept of God, perhaps more enlightened than any polytheism, is an ethnic con-

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49. Text v. 342, trans., F.L. WOODWARD, *Book of Gradual Sayings*, v, London, 1972, p. 219. A.J. EDMUNDS, *Buddhist and Christian Gospels*, Tokyo, 1905, § 32, pp. 120-121. DERRETT, *Bible* (2000), pp. 78-79. Cf. Acts 28:4-6; Mk 16:18.

50. Trans., Ñāṇamoli, pp. 338-339.

51. Dīgha-nikāya text i. 202, trans., i, p. 263.

vention reflecting a stage of civilisation. It binds no one and is not disparaged by the Buddha<sup>52</sup>.

### Christ's Angels

Angels came to help Jesus on two occasions, firstly at Mt 4:11 and Mk 1:13 where after he was tempted "angels came and ministered to him", and secondly at Lk 22:43, where (at Gethsemane) an angel "strengthened" Jesus. We can momentarily discard the second, since the uncial manuscripts are divided between those who have it and those who do not<sup>53</sup>. It is an invention by we do not know whom; and it is not even securely to be attributed to Luke, in whose printed gospel we find it between brackets. There is a Buddhist parallel, but its relation to the laconic Mk 1:13 seems to be as complicated as that between Korah and Ps 91 on the one hand and Devadatta's plotting on the other. In that case an adaptation of Jewish material by a Buddhist seems undeniable: here too one may suspect a circular movement.

The word "ministered" (Gk *diēkonoun*) means either *fed* like a butler or waiter<sup>54</sup>, or supervised his nourishment<sup>55</sup>. The idea that the angels of Mk 1:13 had a broader commission occurred to some commentators<sup>56</sup>, but the vocabulary hardly supports this. Commentators on Mt 4:11, as it happens, are often quite vague, with a courageous exception<sup>57</sup>. That *devatās* fed or attempted to feed Gotama in the

52. Majjhima-nikāya I 39, text i. 272, trans., I.B. HORNER, *Middle Length Sayings*, London, 1976, pp. 325-326. The key words are *na param vambhissāma* which contains basic ideas. Without it attempts to benefit the castes, tribes, and non-Indic peoples the Buddha and his missionaries encountered would have been pointless.

53. Apparatus at Nestle-Aland, *Novum Testamentum Graece*, Stuttgart, 1983, p. 235. J.H. NEYREY at *Bibl.* 61 (1980), p. 153 n. 1; T. VAN LOPIK at *N.T.S.* 41, pt. 2, 1995, pp. 286-289.

54. Cf. Mk 1:31; Acts 6:1-2. H.W. BEYER, art. *Diakoneō*, etc., *Theol. Wört. z. Neuen Testament* II, pp. 81-93, esp. p. 81<sup>35-39</sup>. J.J. WETSTENIUS *ad* Mt 4:11; R. PESCH, *Markusevangelium* I, Freiburg i. B., 1976, p. 76; J. MARKUS, *Mark 1-8*, Garden City NY, 1999, pp. 167-168; J. GNILKA, *Matthäusevangelium* I, Freiburg, 1986, p. 91; R.A. GUELICH, *Mark 1-8:26*, Dallas, 1989, *ad loc.*

55. Cf. Soph., *Phil.* 285-287; Plato, *Leg.* 805E.

56. C.S. MANN, *Mark*, Garden City, 1986, pp. 202-204.

57. U. LUZ, *Matthew 1-7*, Edinburgh, 1989, pp. 188-191; D.A. HAGNER,

ways conveyed by *diakoneō* is not generally appreciated, but both the action and the circumstances have an interest for us. One might be inclined to wonder, did the motif pass from gospels to Buddhists, which happened in some cases <sup>58</sup>, or did the Buddhist idea infect Mark, and from him Matthew?

We cannot guess without considering the Angel at 1 Kgs 19:5-8. This passage has a further life in Jewish *midrash*, but stands in a sharper contrast to Mk 1:13 than is usually assumed – for commentators from the 17th century till today <sup>59</sup> cite 1 Kgs 19 as the biblical background to the incident at Mk 1:13. Its uniqueness is something 1 Kgs 19 and Mk 1:13 have in common, a uniqueness emphasized by Moses' lack of such ministrations at Dt 9:18! The concept of an individual's guardian angel became familiar in Judaism <sup>60</sup>, but that is not close to what we are studying. The fall of manna, "food of angels" (Dt 8:3; Ps 78:24-25) is likewise hardly a striking parallel, considering Jesus possessed and distributed what was superior to manna (Jn 6:49,51,58).

At 1 Kgs 19:5-8 an angel cooks bread and provides bread and water for Elijah, who is utterly despondent, and is a fugitive (19:14). He cannot escape Yahweh, who, once his prophet has regained strength for a lengthy undertaking, sends him on a prolonged political mission with religious overtones (19:15-18). The differences between Elijah and Jesus are notable, though admittedly Elijah found his apprentice at 19:19 and Jesus his disciples at Mk 4:17. For the former had no hope, and despaired of life: he said as much at 1 Kgs 19:4. He was then provided with items of nourishment by the single angel. He was not performing a fast (Mt 4:2), nor had he been subject to temptation by Satan. The angel is instrumental in Elijah's finding, by chance,

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*Matthew 1-13*, Dallas, 1993, p. 69. But W.D. DAVIES and D.C. ALLISON, *The Gospel according to St Matthew I*, Edinburgh, 1988, p. 374, give full attention to the clause, including references to manna and to Adam.

58. DERRETT, *Bible* (2000), pp. 57-67 (nos. 12-29).

59. H. HAMMOND, J.A. BENGE, H. ALFORD, H.B. SWETE, A. FARRER, etc. Davies and Allison take this view.

60. Mt 4:6; 18:10; Acts 12:15; 1 Cor 11:10. b. *Sanh.* 94a; *Ta'an.* 11a; Tos. *Šab.* 17,2f; Midrash Rabbah Gen. LXXVIII; Mid. R. Exod. XXXIII.6; Tanḥuma, *Mišpaṭim* 99a. Strack-Billerbeck, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 151, 781-782. R.J.Z. WERBLOWSKY and G. WIGODER, *Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion*, 1997, p. 49, col. 1.



a goal and a purpose. But at Mk 1:13 Jesus was triumphant; he already had his mission; he knew he was a potential conqueror; the angels were congratulating him <sup>61</sup>, taking the place recently left by defeated Satan. Mt 26:53 proved that Jesus could count on twelve legions of angels – but that is another matter. It can be said there is a parallel to Mk 1:13 at Jn 4:31-34, where Jesus' "food" is doing his Father's work, a very vague parallel; but neither gospel verse is close to 1 Kgs 19:5-8, which has its own echo at Jn 21:9,13 as well as our possibly spurious Lk 22:43. On the other hand the Elijah passage was congruous with Jewish notions of how angels should behave. They have an ongoing interest in God's strange creation, Man <sup>62</sup>, which dates from the time when the sinless Adam lay at his ease in Paradise, and the angels cooked for him and waited on him like waiters, a rare and possibly late Jewish fancy <sup>63</sup> which could be linked with the Pauline picture of Jesus as the Second Adam (Rom 5:4; 1 Cor 15:22,45). Though interesting, this conjecture also is vague and unproven.

The story of Elijah's being fed could easily stimulate invention (cf. 1 Kgs 17:4,6). Elijah was a great, if not the greatest prophet. His ongoing work was jeopardised, in the desert, by despondency and uncertainty. We know from what must be an ancient legend that the god Brahmā Sahampati had to argue with the Buddha and persuade him to become a preacher and teacher <sup>64</sup>. That was a vital step in his biography which can hardly be totally apocryphal and may be owed to the Buddha himself. The pattern whereby the starving man-with-a-future *could be fed* supernaturally fits the quest for Enlightenment, though obliquely, and one may conjecture that the unique tale of 1 Kgs 19 appealed to Buddhists, especially if the idea of angelic feeding

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61. So St John Chrysostom, in J.A. Cramer's *Catena* (1840), p. 27: κροτοῦντες καὶ δορυφοροῦντες.

62. J.D.M. DERRETT, «*Anthrōpoi eudokias*» (Lk 2.14b), in *Fil. Neot.* 11 (1998), pp. 101-106. An angels fed Mary in the Temple: *Protevangel. Jac.* 8.1.

63. b. *Sanh.* 59b: the ministering angels who minister to Yahweh (*mal'ākēy hašārēt*). 'Avōt de Rabbi Natan (3rd cent.), I.5. GINZBERG, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 68, 71; V, p. 93. In spite of the animals Adam is not back in Paradise.

64. *Samyutta-nikāya* i.137; trans., Mrs Rhys Davids, i, pp. 172-174; also *Majjhima-nikāya* i. 168-9, 171, 172-173; *Dīgha-nikāya*, ii. 36-40; *Vinaya* i. 4-7. A. BAREAU, *Recherches ... Maudgalyāyana* (1963), pp. 135-143. M. FUSS, *Buddhavacana and Dei Verbum*, Leiden, 1991, pp. 190-191.

already existed in India. 1 Kgs 19 proves, as it were, that such a facility ought to be available in the interests of the Dhamma, and not merely coincidentally. Remembering that *devatās* lived by the thousand in rocks, trees, buildings, etc., and that pro- as well as anti-Buddha *devatās* existed<sup>65</sup>, we may turn to Miln. 165<sup>66</sup>, which relates what happened after the Buddha was refused alms by the Brahmins of Pañcasālā.

Hundreds of thousands of other (anti-Māra) *devas*, bringing an ambrosial *deva*-like nutritive essence (*amatā dibbā oja*), approached the Lord and, honouring him, stood with their palms joined in salutation, thinking, «We will infuse the nutritive essence into the Lord's body».

This passage is reminiscent of (Pāli) Majjhima-nikāya i. 245<sup>67</sup>: in his pre-enlightenment condition the Buddha (strictly Bodhisattva) was not breathing, so that he alarmed the *devatās*. He even thought of desisting from all nourishment. *Devatās* came and threatened to give him *deva*-like essence through the skin. The Buddha rejected this because it would be an imposture, opting instead for something like a soup. On the other hand the *devatās*' charitable offer was allegedly applied to Gotama while still a Bodhisattva in the Nidānakathā, *Jāt.* i. 67-68<sup>68</sup>; but he starved himself till he fainted and "angels" told his father he was dead, correcting the diagnosis later.

The *deva*-like nutritive essence is only a form of *oja*, "essence", well-known as *ojas* in Vedic and later Sanskrit, meaning "vigour,

65. The Buddha could see them: Dīgha-nikāya ii. 87, trans., *Dialogues of the Buddha*, p. 92 ("fairies"); T. LING, *The Buddha's Philosophy of Man*, London, 1981, pp. 155-156 ("local deities"); Introd. to *Jāt.* 40, i. 226-231; trans., T.W. RHYS DAVIDS, *Buddhist Birth Stories* I, London, 1880, pp. 326-334 (a non-Buddhist *devatā*).

66. Trans., Horner, i, p. 219. D'ALVIELLA, *Ce que l'Inde doit à la Grèce* (Paris: Geuthner, 1926), p. 129.

67. Trans., Horner (1954), i, pp. 299-300; BAREAU, *Recherches* (1963), p. 46. THOMAS, *Life* (1975), p. 65 gives the parallel reference to the Lalitavistara. BAREAU found no parallel to M. i. 245 in the Chinese versions of the Sutta-piṭaka. One may infer that the Pāli holds material later than the separation of the schools, while the Miln. reflects standard Buddhist scriptures of the first-second centuries AD.

68. Trans., RHYS DAVIDS, *Buddhist Birth Stories* (above, n. 65), p. 90.

energy, power", possessed, as it happens, by deities of the Bodhi tree who have *oja* as part of their names! *Oja* is the strength of food, essence by which beings sustain themselves <sup>69</sup>. Food, drink, even dress can be called *dibba* (*deva*-like), indeed any facility open to *devatās*. This *deva*-like nutritive essence is found at Miln. 231-2. *Devatās* could sprinkle *deva*-like nutritive essence over the Buddha's daily food, thus improving its quality (Miln. 231), and particularly at his last alms-gathering (Miln. 175).

I propose that the movement of ideas was this: first Buddhists accepted the angel's feeding of Elijah as a pattern of how the Bodhisattva was sustained prior to his Enlightenment, before he took ordinary food. This encouraged Buddhists to develop the idea that *devatās*, equivalent to angels, care for and in special cases minister to the Enlightened One, and especially about the time of his conquest of Māra. This behaviour, not hostile to a growing belief amongst Jews in angels <sup>70</sup>, in turn stimulated Christian (no doubt Jewish) missionaries in some part of the Parthian empire to develop a piece of apparently Buddhist mythology as congruent with their myth of the Temptation by Satan. Temptation has a distinctly Buddhist sound (Satan = Māra) <sup>71</sup>, so such a conclusion could seem appropriate. The angels, as we see from Lk 2:9-15, can be shown to be continuously interested in the future Messiah, in which respect Jesus and the Buddha are close mutual analogues. The baby Jesus was a new man, worthy of Jewish approval, as of God's <sup>72</sup>. Lk 22:43a continues the notion with the angel strengthening Jesus, an act having a distinctly Buddhist sound. The origin of the whole odyssey of the idea will have been 1 Kgs 19.

69. *Ojā* is essence (Saṃyutta-nikāya v. 162); strength (of food) (Aṅguttara-nikāya iii.396); *Jāt.* i.68; Dhammapada Commentary ii.154 (Burlingame ii, p. 193). It is explained by Buddhaghosa at Visuddhi-magga 450 (XIV.70), trans., Nāṇamoli (1975), p. 502. It may be of interest that in Jewish dietary law forbidden fluids may not be rubbed on the skin: evidently in Buddhist ideas the skin and the hair can receive nourishment. On *ojā* see C.A.F. Rhys Davids (n. 47 supra), pp. 211 n. 3; 274 & n. 4.

70. Above, n. 60. Acts 23:8. E. SCHÜRER, *History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, new English edition, II, Edinburgh, 1979, pp. 392(2), 581. For human harmony with angels see 1 Cor 11:10. For the Qumran fantasy 4Q400,404,405,407; 11Q17. F. GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated*, Leiden, <sup>2</sup>1996, pp. 419-431.

71. DERRETT, *Bible* (2000), no. 2, pp. 47-51.

72. N. 62 above.

*Conclusion*

The twin stories of Devadatta illustrate the process whereby Jewish material, introduced to Buddhists, could adapt and develop an already famous tale. This could have occurred before Christianity. Buddhists could read Jewish material sympathetically, as if congruent with Buddhism, and could use it even in inter-Buddhist propaganda: the limitations constraining the Jewish mind did not disconcert them<sup>73</sup>. On the other hand the stimulus of 1 Kgs 19, confirmatory of the Buddha's need of support about the time of his Enlightenment, returned to Christian missionaries as a sort of interest on their «loan»: angels could feed, supernaturally, without cooking (!), a Jesus whose career lay clearly before him. They had watched over him before, and, some would say, did so until Gethsemane, if not also thereafter. On this evidence, if there were not more to hand, we should be justified in accepting a two-way interchange between Jews and Jewish as well as Greek converts to Christianity, on the one hand, and Buddhists on the other.

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73. The existence of Hellenized Jews was certified by Clearchus, pupil of Aristotle: see Josephus, *con. Apion.* i. 175-182.